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EXCISE

Thursday, March 5, 1953

I called upon Van Starkenborgh, the Dutch Representative to the EDC, at 10:00 this morning. He was Ambassador to France when I first came here and married Christine Marburg, whose family lived in the same block as myself when I was a boy in Baltimore. He is a [redacted] tenacious, able and fine man. He considers many of the demands embodied in the French Protocols highly unreasonable. He says [redacted] Alphand is not a free agent to conduct the negotiations, but is constantly impeded by capricious orders from the Quai d'Orsay, where sentiment is heavily against the EDC. He considers much of the trouble emanates from Georges Bidault, who is playing a tortuous game.

Van Starkenborgh thinks the most desirable procedure would be to have the Germans pass the Treaty on the Third Reading in the Bundestag, for the Italians to follow shortly thereafter, and the Dutch be the third nation to ratify. He has no present hope that Van Zeeland will exercise his influence to bring about [redacted] early action in the Belgian Parliament.

When I left him I went to call on Herr Blank, Chief of the German Delegation. He is going back to Bonn tomorrow. He says [redacted] the Third Reading in the Bundestag should result in a vote for ratification. He is worried about the French protocols and says he cannot advocate ratification if the French insist on putting through any provisions that would modify the terms and spirit of the Treaty.

Von Kessel told me afterwards that the German Delegation was remaining in the background during the present controversy and allowing the Belgians and Dutch to carry the torch.

I went to a lunch given in my honor by the Alphands at their apartment at 85 rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. Claude looked lovely and was the only lady present. The others were the heads of the various EDC Delegations as well as Sir ...

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Sir Frederick Hoyer Millar, the British Observer; the Delegation Chiefs were Theodor Blank of Germany, Lombardo of Italy, de Staercke of Belgium, Van Starkenborgh of Holland, and Hommel of Luxembourg. We had an enjoyable time. Afterwards André de Staercke came back to my office with me and discussed in complete confidence the difficulties of Belgian politics which greatly complicate his task here. He is bright and constructive, a devoted believer in the idea of European unity.

I bought today from my old friends, Neuville, the print dealers on Place Beauvau, a miniature of Talleyrand as an elderly man, which they have been keeping for me, as well as an ivory relief of Charles Bonaparte, Napoleon's father. The likeness of Talleyrand is rare. I paid 45,000 francs for this one and 1,500 francs for the Bonaparte.

Jean Jacques Boyer came to call. He says his father has had a recurrence of cancer. He is confined to his apartment, and there is no hope for a recovery. This is sad; he is my oldest French friend. His wine business is in the process of liquidation and there will be little left for Madame Boyer.

BJ-EC

Ed Martin called. He arrived last Friday and is hard at work on the Annual Review. Already they are engaged in discussions of a difficult character regarding the size of the German military contribution, in view of the French insistence that if there is a cut-back in French continental forces, there should be a proportionate cut in German forces.

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Starting at 6 p.m. I had a long conference with the Evaluation Team of business men that is considering MSA operations.

At 7:30 p.m. I went with Ted Achilles to call on Foreign Minister Bidault. He said he would preside at the meeting of Foreign Ministers next Monday in Strasbourg, and would receive from Spaak the draft of the European Political Treaty. Although he considered it a good piece of work, he felt it gave rise to many disputable questions which would have to be considered by a Committee, the members of which would be appointed by the various Governments.

This, of course, will be a time-consuming operation and will probably make impossible Spaak's desire, strongly favored by Monnet (who called me on this matter tonight), to have this affair handled directly at Cabinet level and brought to a speedy conclusion.

Bidault also seemed skeptical about any early action on EDC, indicating that because of the French commitment in Indo-China, protocols taking care of France's peculiar interests must be accepted by the other nations. I did not ask him many questions or argue with him, since it seemed better to do so at a later date when I can see him alone and unofficially.

We went to dinner tonight, taking the Boys, at the Relais de la Belle Aurore on Place du Marché St. Honoré.

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